

Community in shock over tragic death

4-8-99

Dealing with death is always tough. It has no boundaries and it can strike when one least expects it.

Such was the case for Lisa Mae Sippel, a Groton High School senior and the daughter of Bruce and Vickie Sippel.

Christopher Maack, 18, Aberdeen, and Lisa were on their way home from looking at a college. They encountered some dense fog near Ortley. Maack was west-bound on U.S. Highway 12 and was attempting to pass a semi-truck when an east-bound semi-truck driven by David Odden, 54, Fargo, collided with the Maack vehicle. The accident occurred at 6:36 p.m. Thursday.

Someone who was at the scene had called to the Sippel home Friday morning and told them, "Your daughter went to heaven right away before the fire overtook the car."

By 10:30 p.m. Thursday, rumors started to float around Groton about an accident. No one seemed exactly sure who was in the accident, but fear took over the students who had gathered at the Circle Pines for a birthday celebration.

Once word was received that it was Lisa, the phone lines were busy as students started crying to their parents on the phone. Students were even asking their parents for a hug. A hug -- Lisa had even written a poem about a hug and it follows:

Ode to Hugs

Hugs make the world go round
They make you happy when you're sad
They bring people together
They make you warm
They brighten your days
They make the best of the bad
You can't hate someone and give them a hug
It's like being angry and eating jello
It just makes you happy

- Lisa Sippel
November 29, 1998

Lisa Mae Sippel

The funeral for Lisa Mae Sippel, 17, of Groton, was held Tuesday at St. John's Lutheran Church in Groton with the Rev. Craig Grams officiating. Burial followed in the Groton Union Cemetery. Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel of Groton was in charge of arrangements.

She died as the result of an auto accident Thursday, April 1, 1999, east of Ortley.

Lisa Mae Sippel was born July 19, 1981, to Bruce and Vickie (Luce) Sippel of Groton at Aberdeen. She lived on a farm north of Groton and attended Groton schools. She was a senior and an honors student at Groton High School. She had worked at the Beverly Healthcare Center in Groton and was currently employed at Burger King in Aberdeen.

She was a member of the 1999 All-State Band, the Groton Debate Squad all four years of high school and on the varsity squad her junior and senior years. She had recently earned the Double Ruby Special Distinction Degree from the National Forensic League. She had been a member of the Groton Odyssey of the Mind team. She was a member of St. John's Lutheran Church and the Disciples for Christ youth group of the



church in Groton. She was also active in 4-H.

Survivors include her parents of Groton; one brother, Adam Sippel of Groton; two sisters, Emily Sippel and Felicia Sippel, both of Groton; her paternal grandmother, Lorraine Sippel of Groton; her maternal grandmother, Vivian Luce of Gettysburg; her maternal great grandfather, Carroll Klapperich of Redfield; and her special friend, Shaun Rickett of Highmore.

She was preceded in death by both grandfathers, one great-grandfather and two great-grandmothers.

Casketbearers were Derek Pfitzer, Lance Cowan, John Luce III, Doug Nash Jr., Skye Leshner and Kevin Pray.

The talented musician, debater, OM student, just to mention a few things she was involved with, now wears the white gown in heaven that the Rev. Craig Grams talked about in the funeral held Tuesday afternoon at St. John's Lutheran Church. Cars were parked for blocks around the church. School was dismissed early so that faculty and students could attend the funeral at the church across the street south of the high school.

Lisa may no longer be among us on this planet, but at the time of Easter, we are reminded that Jesus defeated death when He rose on the third day as proclaimed by the prophets. Jesus' victory over death assures us a room in heaven.

Meanwhile, remember the memories of Lisa Mae Sippel. As long as we remember, she will remain in our hearts.

- Paul Kosel